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Kerbside Glass Collection Service	
Committee	Overview & Scrutiny
Date of Committee	11 November 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Ian Middleton
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	August 2025
Report of	Assistant Director Environmental Services / Corporate Director Communities

Purpose of report

This report sets out the options for the Kerbside glass collection, and other new requirements driven by the Environment Act. It provides the necessary details to enable an informed decision.

1. Recommendations

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee resolves:

- 1.1 Support the proposed changes to the service, introducing kerbside glass collections in January 2026.
- 1.2 Note the potential impacts of the Environment Act on the waste collection service and that a further report on other elements of Simpler Recycling will come forward to Executive in the near future

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Several legislative changes, including the Environment Act, will significantly alter the waste collection service for residents. These changes are driven by initiatives like

- Simpler Recycling
- Deposit Return Scheme

- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Emissions Trading Scheme

- 2.2 Simpler Recycling is a new law that ensures the same materials are collected by all councils across the country. By April 2026, the default is for residents to receive kerbside collections of paper, cardboard, cans, plastic bottles, and glass. This may result in residents having at least four containers. Full compliance will require issuing residents with a container for paper and cardboard and adding glass to the dry mixed recycling, which could cost around £1.5 million in capital.
- 2.3 The Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), starting in October 2027, will require a deposit on drinks containers, which is repaid when the container is returned. This is expected to substantially reduce the number of drink cans and plastic bottles in dry mixed recycling from October 2027. The full details of the scheme have yet to be developed. However, during 2026 how the scheme will work should become clearer.
- 2.4 The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme shifts the recycling costs from local authorities to packaging producers and retailers. In November 2025, the Council should receive £1.7 million from the packaging industry for collection and treatment costs. To continue annually receiving future similar payments, the service must be judged as 'effective & efficient'.
- 2.5 The Emissions Trading Scheme will cover Energy from Waste Plants starting in 2027. This could cost the County Council £3 million in extra disposal costs. Reducing the amount of residual waste and increasing recycling could minimise this cost. However, the current flow of funds between the disposal authority and the collection authorities means that to do more recycling will cost the collection authorities more, with all the financial benefits being received by the disposal authority. Therefore, the County Council is proposing an incentive scheme so that collection authorities receive much of the financial benefits from doing more recycling.
- 2.6 The Simpler Recycling Project Board has considered these changes. This report focuses on introducing the Kerbside Glass collection in 2025/26. The new waste collection service has several possible options, which will be presented soon.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	<p>The current mode of glass collection in the district via bring banks results in a net income budget of £348k pa. Costs are currently limited to salaries, specialised vehicles and transfer fees which are all more than offset by the commodity price of glass (and to a lesser extent the other commodities recycled at the bring banks, eg. textiles) resulting in the net income position.</p> <p>All of the options considered to introduce kerbside glass collection will unavoidably increase the costs of the service. The proposed option of collecting glass in recycling blue bins is the least expensive. The forecast net cost of collecting glass in the blue bins is predominantly driven by the additional tonnage from glass transferring to the blue bins which will then be subject to gate fees as all dry mixed recycling currently is. Gate fees are significantly higher than the transfer fees paid for glass (separate from other dry mixed recycling). In addition, income is impacted because the glass will no longer attract a commodity price but will instead be subject to recycling credits, which are not as lucrative.</p> <p>The options around collecting glass separately would improve the income achieved and not be subject to gate fees; however, these improvements are more than offset by the additional revenue costs of operating and resourcing the additional vehicles required, resulting in net costs higher than the options to include glass in blue bins. Please see section 4.6 for a breakdown of the forecast span of increased costs compared to the current budget for the options considered.</p> <p>The staff employed on bring banks are expected to be eligible to apply to vacancies elsewhere in the service; therefore, no</p>

	<p>redundancy or pension strain costs are expected from the recommended option.</p> <p>Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance, 01295 221545</p>			
Legal	<p>Denzil Turbevill, Head of Legal, 01295 221586</p> <p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to arrange for the collection of household waste in its area under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.</p> <p>The Council also has to comply with the Environment Act 2021 to ensure that certain recyclable materials are collected appropriately.</p> <p>The proposals set out within this report will help to ensure that we remain compliant with our obligations.</p>			
Risk Management	<p>The Council has to carry out most of the functions of Waste & Environmental Services as they are statutory services.</p> <p>A robust governance & risk management framework will be implemented to ensure a successful service change.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader,</p>			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact				Not applicable
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is		Y		Not applicable

delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		Y		Not applicable
Climate & Environmental Impact	x			Increasing recycling has a positive impact on the environment. Using recycled materials rather than virgin materials develops a circular economy and helps to address climate change
ICT & Digital Impact		x		No impact
Data Impact		x		No impact
Procurement & subsidy		x		Any purchase of wheeled bins would be through framework agreements
Council Priorities	Supporting Environmental Sustainability			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	N/A			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The council collects around 60,000 tonnes of waste each year from approximately 73,000 properties. The current service includes an alternate-week residual waste bin, an alternate-week dry mixed recycling bin, and a weekly food waste recycling bin. The national waste strategy, launched in December 2018, requires a change to move towards a circular economy. Simpler Recycling requires collection authorities to collect paper, cardboard, plastics, steel, aluminium cans, and glass at the kerbside.
- 3.2 The current alternate week collection service was introduced in 2003/04. Since then, the main changes to the service have been the introduction of food waste collections. Initially, food was added to the garden waste service around 2010. Then, in 2022, a garden waste subscription service was introduced with a weekly separate collection of food waste. Other smaller services such as the collection of batteries, small electrical items and coffee pods have been successfully introduced over the years.
- 3.4 Simpler Recycling requires collection authorities to collect the same materials and deliver similar services. Commercial collections should be in by 31 March 2025, with Domestic properties by 31 March 2026. From 31 March 2027, plastic film needs to be added to the range of collection materials. A late addition to the collection requirements was collecting paper & cardboard separately from the other dry recycling materials
- 3.5 Two changes are required to meet the requirements of Simpler Recycling. Firstly, glass must be collected at the kerbside. In addition, paper and cardboard must be collected separately from the rest of the recycling materials.
- 3.6 A TEEP (Technically, Environmentally & Economically Practical) assessment may help delay implementation. A TEEP assessment could be written to delay implementation of the collection of paper and cardboard separately. This argument is likely to be developed by the uncertainty of the impact of DRS on the dry mixed recycling collections. However, it is unlikely that a TEEP assessment to postpone the glass collection would be robust.

4. Details

- 4.1 Currently, glass is recycled through an extensive network of over 100 glass banks. This low-cost method captures about 70% of household glass. Introducing a kerbside glass collection is expected to increase the recycling rate by only 1% to 1.5%, adding 500-700 tonnes of glass per year to the recycling stream. With the introduction of kerbside collection, most of the glass bring bank sites will be removed in a planned manner.
- 4.2 The banks are located at well over 100 sites, so residents can recycle their bottles at supermarkets, local shops, village halls, and community centres. This low-cost collection method requires one staff member and a specialist crane lorry. The glass produces an income stream. The bring banks in some areas can be a focus for fly tipping, with materials being dumped around them.
- 4.3 There are three options for glass collection:
1. Collecting glass mixed in with the blue bin.
 2. Collecting glass separately.
 3. Continuing with the bring bank system (not collecting at the kerbside).
- 4.4 Glass collected at the sorting centre (Materials Recovery Facility or MRF) is separated by machines. The large pieces are sorted by colour for further processing, whilst smaller pieces are used for road aggregate or short blasting material. The gate fee at the current MRF is now the same regardless of whether glass is present in the mixed recycling.
- 4.5 With the introduction of kerbside glass collection, most of the existing glass bring bank sites will be removed. This is because the volume of glass recycled through these banks will rapidly decrease. Many of these sites can be removed within a few weeks, with all likely to be gone within a few months.
- 4.6 The following table summarises the financial implications of each option, comparing them to the 2025/26 budget:

	Best Case Last 12 Months	Current Pressure	Worst Case Last 12 Months	Range

Dry Recycling service with Glass in the blue bin (with Bring bank at 4 sites) Option 1 (a)	£ 405,863	£ 442,193	£ 493,663	£ 87,800
Dry Recycling service with Glass in the blue bin (NO Bring Bank sites) – Option 1 (b)	£ 389,732	£ 428,036	£ 475,840	£ 86,108
Dry Recycling service with Glass collected separately at kerbside (with Bring Bank at 4 sites) Option 2 (a)	£ 408,710	£ 422,010	£ 516,250	£ 107,540
Dry Recycling service with Glass collected separately at kerbside (NO Bring Bank sites) Option 2 (b)	£ 360,628	£ 373,928	£ 468,168	£ 107,540

Below is the impact of commencing collections from January 2026 rather than April 2026

	Forecasted Outturn as at September (Based on Glass from April 2026)	Revised Forecasted Outturn (to include Glass from January 2026)	Variance (New Pressure for Environmental Services during 2025/26)
Gate Fees	51,497	88,055	36,558
Recycling Credits	-235,508	-232,651	2,857
Sale of Glass	-235,000	-184,313	50,687
Cost for Collection of Bring Banks	0	17,243	17,243
	-419,011	-311,666	107,345

- 4.7 A communications plan is being developed to inform residents of the changes. The goal is to start this communication process after the report goes to the Executive in November, with information potentially included in a Christmas mailing. As more residents begin putting glass in their blue bins, the amount of glass at the existing bring bank sites will decrease, allowing for their gradual closure over several months. The closure of Bring Bank sites will also mean a reduction in clothes banks and hence a small reduction in the number of textiles being recycled.
- 4.8 In late 2024, the council began working with Oxford City Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to explore potential financial efficiencies. This collaboration is progressing, as it could lead to significant savings and may be a precursor to a new unitary council potentially covering all three areas.
- 4.9 All three councils have very similar waste collection services, with the main difference being how they handle glass. Oxford City Council already collects glass with other recyclables, while West Oxfordshire collects it separately at the kerbside. To realise the financial benefits of working together, this council and West Oxfordshire must align their glass collection methods with Oxford City. Therefore,

when deciding on a technique for kerbside glass collection, the partners' methods have been carefully considered.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 The following alternative options have been identified. Option 1 is the Officer's preferred solution

5.2 Option 1: Collect glass mixed in with the blue bin (Preferred Option)

This option involves adding glass to the existing blue bin with other dry-mixed recyclables. It is straightforward, does not require extra vehicles or staff, and is easy for residents to use.

Key Financials: This option has no additional capital costs for new containers or vehicles. While there would be a capital cost of around £1.5 million for new bins for each property to comply with Simpler Recycling fully, this specific option does not add to it. However, the financial value of colour-separated glass is lost, and the gate fee at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is the same whether glass is present or not, as of a new contract in August 2025. The gate fee would cover 15,000 tonnes of dry mixed recycling with glass, up from 11,500 tonnes without.

5.3 Option 2: Collect Glass Separately at the Kerbside (Rejected Option)

This method would require residents to have another container, likely a box, specifically for glass. It would also require more staff and vehicles.

Key Financials: The option for separate kerbside glass collection has significant capital costs:

- New vehicles: **£625,000**
- New kerbside boxes: **£316,800**
- Total estimated capital cost: **£941,800**
- The costs include delivery of boxes (**£30,000**) and removal of bring banks (**£25,171**).

There are also ongoing revenue costs resulting from capital expenditure to consider. Once these are added to the figures in section 4.6, the options relating to separate glass collection become the most expensive to implement. The additional revenue costs are forecast on an incremental basis in the table below:

<u>MRP & Interest - Borrowing Costs for Glass collected separately at Kerbside</u>						
	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	
Glass Collection Vehicles	£ 25,000.00	£ 67,829.90	£ 2,713.20	£ 2,821.72	£ 2,934.59	£ 101,299.41
Kerbside Boxes for Glass	£ 13,872.00	£ 28,885.30	£ 1,155.41	£ 1,201.63	£ 1,249.69	£ 46,364.03
	£ 38,872.00	£ 96,715.19	£ 3,868.61	£ 4,023.35	£ 4,184.29	£ 147,663.44

This option also introduces new health and safety risks for collection staff related to manual handling and noise.

5.4 **Option 3: Produce a TEEP assessment and continue using bring banks (Rejected)**

This option involves a TEEP (Technically, Environmentally & Economically Practical) assessment, which may help to delay the implementation of the new requirements. The current low-cost glass bring bank system captures 70% of household glass. The Kerbside glass collection is significantly more expensive than the current bank system.

A TEEP assessment arguing for a delay in glass collection is unlikely to be robust or accepted. There are no technical or environmental barriers to kerbside collection. The economic argument will likely be considered weak, especially since the council will receive significant EPR funding from November 2025.

6 **Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 The council recommends introducing glass recycling from the kerbside by adding it to the blue bin during January 2026 to comply with Simpler Recycling. This approach has several benefits:

- This should make it easier for residents to recycle their glass and lead to a slight increase in the recycling rate (1-1.5%).

- It does not require additional capital for new containers or vehicles or the associated revenue implications of capital expenditure.
- It aligns with the method of glass collection used by Oxford City Council, which is essential as the three councils (including West Oxfordshire) move toward a potential new unitary council.

6.2 Remove the remaining banks in a planned manner. In some areas, the bring banks can be a focus for fly tipping. As kerbside glass collection is introduced, the volume of glass through the glass banks will fall.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	None
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
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Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Nicola Riley Executive Director Neighbourhood Services (Interim)